YEATS'S GOLDEN DAWN

By the same author

THE NEOPLATONISM OF WILLIAM BLAKE

YEATS'S QUEST FOR EDEN

A CONCORDANCE TO THE WRITINGS OF WILLIAM BLAKE

(with others)

THOMAS TAYLOR THE PLATONIST: SELECTED WRITINGS

(with Kathleen Raine)

'GO BACK TO WHERE YOU BELONG': YEATS'S RETURN FROM EXILE

YEATS'S GOLDEN DAWN

George Mills Harper

M

© George Mills Harper 1974

Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1974

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission.

First published 1974 by
THE MACMILLAN PRESS LTD
London and Basingstoke
Associated companies in New York
Dublin Melbourne Johannesburg and Madras

SBN 333 15030 9

ISBN 978-1-349-01967-0

ISBN 978-1-349-01965-6 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-01965-6

To

KATHLEEN RAINE

for, in the words of Yeats to Vestigia,
'to whom else could I dedicate this book?'

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	ix
1 A SHAPE FOR VAGUE THOUGHTS	I
2 LUDICROUS PROCEEDINGS	14
3 DIVISIONS, BICKERINGS, AND SCANDALS	27
4 A RECORD OF THE EXECUTIVE DIFFICULTY	36
5 THE CASE FOR THE MINORITY	46
6 DEFENDING THE MAGIC OF POWER	69
7 UNITY OF WILL ?	92
8 THE ANTAGONISM BETWEEN THE POET AND MAGICIAN	99
9 THE POET'S PROPHECY FULFILLED	121
<i>Epilogue</i>	153
<i>Notes</i>	157
<i>Appendixes</i>	201
<i>Index</i>	317

Preface

Based primarily on unpublished manuscripts from the library of W. B. Yeats, this book would have been impossible without the hospitality and unfailing generosity of the family of Senator Michael B. Yeats, who now possesses the papers. For other primary materials used in this study, I am indebted to Gerald Yorke, who made his collection of Golden Dawn papers available to Kathleen Raine when she and I planned this book as a collaborative effort in 1969. These papers were also made available to Ellic Howe, who has generously answered my questions about people and events connected with the Golden Dawn. His study of *The Magicians of the Golden Dawn* (1972), which was published after my manuscript was finished, was extremely valuable for my revision. I am grateful also to Anne Yeats, who generously invited me to examine the library of W. B. Yeats, now in her possession. Among the other people to whom I cannot give proper thanks are the many fratres and sorores, often unidentified, who corresponded with Yeats about religious experiences and experiments in the Golden Dawn and related Orders. I am most grateful to the American Council of Learned Societies for a fellowship which enabled me to spend several weeks in England and Ireland examining unpublished materials and talking with informed people.

Although this book is based largely on primary materials, I am indebted to several studies about Yeats – in particular Virginia Moore's *The Unicorn* (1954), Joseph Hone's *W. B. Yeats* (1943), and Richard Ellmann's *Yeats: The Man and the Masks* (1948) – and to many of Yeats's own works.

For the generous permission to quote from the following copyrighted materials of W. B. Yeats acknowledgement is gratefully made to Senator Michael B. Yeats, A. P. Watt & Son,

Macmillan Publishing Inc., Macmillan London Ltd and The Macmillan Press Ltd:

The Variorum Edition of the Plays of W. B. Yeats, edited by Russell K. Alspach, copyright 1903, 1904, 1907, 1908, 1912, 1921, 1924, 1928, 1934, 1935, 1951, by The Macmillan Company; 1911, 1938 by William Butler Yeats; 1940 by Georgie Yeats; 1922, 1924 by The Dial Publishing Co.

The Variorum Edition of the Poems of W. B. Yeats, edited by Peter Allt and Russell K. Alspach, copyright 1903, 1906, 1907, 1912, 1916, 1918, 1919, 1924, 1928, 1931, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1940, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1950, 1956, 1957, by The Macmillan Company; 1940 by Georgie Yeats.

The Letters of W. B. Yeats, edited by Allan Wade, copyright 1953, 1954, by Anne Butler Yeats.

Autobiographies, copyright 1926, 1955.

Essays and Introductions, copyright 1961, by Mrs W. B. Yeats.

A Vision, copyright 1925, by T. Werner Laurie Ltd.

The Speckled Bird, copyright 1974.

The Shadowy Waters, copyright 1900, by Hodder and Stoughton.

The Trembling of the Veil, copyright 1922, by T. Werner Laurie Ltd.

The Collected Works of William Butler Yeats, copyright 1908, by The Shakespeare Head Press.

I am grateful to the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery for a reproduction of John Quinn's copy of 'Is the Order of R.R. & A.C. to remain a Magical Order?' and to the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, for a reproduction of P. S. O'Hegarty's copy of 'A Postscript to Essay called "Is the Order of R.R. & A.C. to remain a Magical Order?"'

G.M.H.